Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application.

Listing of the Claims:

- 1. (currently amended) A method for extending the radio coverage area of a communication system operating according to a predetermined radio protocol, the system comprising a primary <u>master</u> station having a radio coverage area, a first secondary <u>slave</u> station within the coverage area and a further secondary <u>slave</u> station which is located outside of the radio coverage area of the primary station, the method comprising a message exchange process in which: the first secondary <u>slave</u> station receives from the primary <u>master</u> station messages intended for the further secondary <u>slave</u> station; and transmits said messages to the further secondary <u>slave</u> station messages intended for the primary <u>master</u> station; and transmits said messages to the primary <u>master</u> station.
- 2. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the message exchange process follows a registration process in which: the further secondary <u>slave</u> station transmits to the first secondary <u>slave</u> station a message comprising registration information, and the first secondary <u>slave</u> station transmits said registration information to the primary <u>master</u> station to register the further secondary <u>slave</u> station with the primary <u>master</u> station.
- 3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 2, wherein the registration information comprises a unique identifier identifying the further secondary <u>slave</u> station, and wherein: the primary <u>master</u> station registers the further secondary <u>slave</u> station by allocating a first identifier associated with the unique identifier of that station and transmits said first identifier to the first secondary <u>slave</u> station, and wherein the first secondary <u>slave</u> station allocates a second identifier associated with the first identifier and with the unique identifier and transmits the second identifier to the further secondary <u>slave</u> station, and wherein messages are subsequently exchanged according to the associated identifiers.

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- 4. (currently amended) A method according to claim 3, wherein communication between the primary <u>master</u> station and the first secondary <u>slave</u> station is synchronised according to a first periodic beacon signal transmitted by said primary <u>master</u> station.
- 5. (currently amended) A method according to claim 4, wherein the first secondary <u>slave</u> station reserves a portion of the time period between the periodic beacon signals, and wherein the first secondary <u>slave</u> station transmits and receives messages to and from the further secondary <u>slave</u> station during this reserved time period.
- 6. (previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the predetermined radio protocol is that defined as the ZigBee radio standard.
- 7. (currently amended) A communication system operating according to a predetermined radio protocol and comprising a primary <u>master</u> station having a radio coverage area, a first secondary <u>slave</u> station within the coverage area and a further secondary <u>slave</u> station which is located outside of the radio coverage area of the primary <u>master</u> station, the first secondary <u>slave</u> station having means for receiving from the primary <u>master</u> station messages intended for the further secondary <u>slave</u> station, for transmitting said messages to the further secondary <u>slave</u> station, for receiving from the further secondary <u>slave</u> station messages intended for the primary <u>master</u> station and for transmitting said messages to the primary <u>master</u> station.
- 8. (currently amended) A communication system according to claim 7, wherein the first secondary <u>slave</u> station further comprises means for receiving a message comprising registration information from the further secondary <u>slave</u> station and means for transmitting said registration information to the primary <u>master</u> station to register the further secondary <u>slave</u> station with the primary <u>master</u> station.
- 9. (currently amended) A communication system according to claim 7, wherein the exchange of messages between the primary <u>master</u> station and the first secondary <u>slave</u> station is synchronised according to a periodic beacon signal transmitted by said primary <u>master</u> station.
- 10. (currently amended) A communication system according to claim 9, wherein the first secondary <u>slave</u> station reserves a portion of the time period between the periodic beacon signals, and wherein the first secondary <u>slave</u> station transmits to, and receives messages from the further secondary slave station during this reserved time period.

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11. (previously presented) A communication system according to claim 7, wherein the predetermined radio protocol corresponds to the ZigBee radio standard.

12. (currently amended) A first secondary <u>slave</u> station for use in a communication system operating according to a predetermined radio protocol and having a primary <u>master</u> station having a radio coverage area, and a further secondary <u>slave</u> station which is located outside of the radio coverage area of the primary <u>master</u> station, the first secondary <u>slave</u> station being located within the radio coverage area of the primary <u>master</u> station and comprising means for receiving from the primary <u>master</u> station messages intended for the further secondary <u>slave</u> station, for receiving from the further secondary <u>slave</u> station, for receiving from the further secondary <u>slave</u> station and for

13. (currently amended) A first secondary <u>slave</u> station as claimed in claim 12 further comprising means for receiving a message comprising registration information from the further secondary <u>slave</u> station and means for transmitting said registration information to the primary <u>master</u> station to register the further secondary <u>slave</u> station with the primary <u>master</u> station.

14. (currently amended) A first secondary <u>slave</u> station as claimed in claim 12 wherein the predetermined radio protocol corresponds to the ZigBee radio standard.

15. (canceled)

transmitting said messages to the primary <u>master</u> station.

- 16. (canceled)
- 17. (canceled)